

# SATURDAY EVENING POST

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No. 27.

## "HAPPY YEAR."

This peaceful, pleasant new-year day  
I wish to one away,  
And would with every sentence twice  
A tender thought—a loving kiss—  
A fragrant flower to blossom, dear,  
Across the threshold of the year.

If only Love were strong as Fate—  
To make the crooked places straight,  
How should the days be bright and true,  
The goal be reached—the laurel won,  
And fortune prosper—friendship cheer,  
And gladden each recurring year.

If blighted hopes have shadows cast  
Along the path that leads to fate,  
We look beyond them, and forget  
The signs that tell, the cause that fret—  
And clouds that darken disappear  
Before the fair advancing year.

Above the dim days stretched between,  
Across the miles that intervene,  
From barren wastes, from desert sands  
Love reaches out anointing hands,  
And breathes, with many a tender tear,  
A blessing, and a happy year.

MARY F. TUCKER.

## DAVY CROCKETT ON THE TRACK;

OR,  
The Cave of the Counterfeiters.

BY FRANK CARROLL.

AUTHOR OF "THE HEIR OF GLENDALE,"  
"JOHN FARMER'S PLOT," ETC.

### CHAPTER XII.

INSIDE THE CAVE.

A sensation of fear ran through the mind of the interloper on finding himself discovered, and by this dangerous man. The good-natured, mocking tone of the old man was of little assurance, for he knew him to be a cold, cruel, man of that temperament that can commit murder with a smile on the face and a jest on the tongue.

Gordon, however, was too well aware of the company he was in, and had too much command over his feelings, to permit any sense of fear to display itself. He was in the lion's den and must face the danger with a lion's boldness.

He looked involuntarily around to see whence the speaker had so suddenly appeared, and discovered that he had been standing in a niche-like extension of the cave just behind the entrance.

"You see I was at home to receive company," said Henderson, noticing his look. "Do you often call on your friends in this off-hand way, without waiting for an invitation?"

"I generally like to," coolly answered Gordon—Gordon or Thompson as he had introduced himself to his present questioner. "I don't like to put folks to trouble in their housekeeping arrangements."

"Very kind of you," said Henderson. "I see you haven't stood on ceremony. But I don't think we'd have got an extra dinner even if we'd known you were coming."

"It wouldn't have been of any use. I'm always ready for a bite and a snap. What snide my friends snide me, and, without a joke, I think I could eat a small cow just now."

"How would a bit of con do? or a slice of bear meat? We don't do much in cow out here."

"Well, perhaps I could put it down, with whisky sauce."

The outlaw laughed at this answer, losing the mocking expression he had so far retained.

"Step back here a bit," he said. "Maybe we can find a bottle with the cork out, and a slice of cold meat, as long as you feel the worse of your trouble."

He led the way, Henderson proceeded toward the opening out of which the stream flowed from the interior of the cavern.

The thought passed through Gordon's mind whether his best movement would not be to turn and fly from the cave by the passage by which he had entered.

This idea was but momentary. He would be at the mercy of the weapons of the outlaw during his flight through the difficult passage, and his only safe plan would be to brave it out, with the hope that Henderson might still look upon him as likely to prove a useful member of his band.

With some uneasy feelings then, but a belief that there was no safe alternative, he followed his old associate, who walked steadily on, never once looking back to see if Gordon was behind him.

The connecting avenue which they now entered was about three feet in width, contracting at one point to a width that would just permit their passage. It opened out into an apartment that struck the new-comer with wonder and delight, despite his mental preoccupation.

They stood in an immense hall, dimly lit up by the light that struggled in from the entrance, and by several rays that found their way down through the crevices in the roof. The room was nearly round, with a level floor and vaulted ceiling, being some fifty feet in diameter and thirty feet high. But the walls, which had originally been rough, were now covered with sheets and spires of milk-white stalactite, forming a profusion of beautiful figures, to which the original broken character of the wall had given a charming diversity of outline. There were to be seen, with some aid from the imagination, the pipes of a magnificent organ, groups of gigantic statuary, mighty altars, and seats that would have served for the throne of great

Jove himself, all of a material that sparkled in its brilliant whiteness.

From the roof depended long stalactites, like gigantic icicles, seemingly ready to drop at every moment, yet which had hung there for untold centuries.

A sheet of stalactite covered the floor. This had been levelled off, and was trodden to a dingy hue by the impression of many feet, but around the sides of the room it retained its pristine beauty.

The visitor thought he had never beheld anything so beautiful, particularly when his leader lit a lamp that occupied a table in the centre of the apartment, and the walls suddenly flashed and sparkled as though they had been set with innumerable gems.

Henderson stood looking with a grim smile at his silent ecstasy, as if pleased with his admiration, yet not quite satisfied with his intrusion.

"It's not bad to keep bachelor's hall in, is it?" he asked.

"I never saw anything so beautiful," was the reply.

"Glad you like it, Mr. Ned Thompson, which I believe you said was your name. Just oblige me by taking a seat here now. I want to have a bit of a talk with you."

The large table that occupied the centre was surrounded by a dozen rustic arm-chairs, made apparently by some mechanical genius of the gargoyle, of material out in the neighboring woods.

Gordon took the one indicated by his companion, who seated himself directly opposite.

"I suppose you remember the talk I had with you last night on business matters?" asked Henderson.

"Perfectly well," was the reply.

"I told you to keep it to yourself, that it was a secret between you and me."

"Just so," said Gordon, preserving his assumed idiom. "That's what I intend to do."

"The devil you do! And when do you intend to begin?"

"Since our talk last night."

"There's one thing I told you then it might pay you to bear in mind. That was that the fellow that shook hands with me, and then went back on it, was going to get an ounce of lead in his noddle."

"Well, and what then?" asked Gordon, boldly.

"There's only this then, that you've talked it over at the Blue Host, and with some bound that was blasted fool enough to put you on the track of this place."

"I haven't opened my mouth about it since I talked with you."

"That's an infernal lie, Thompson. Do you know that you're in a hole where lies may be planted but they won't grow, or if they do they'll bear nothing but lead bullets? Have you ever heard of a queer place called the Labyrinth?"

"No," he answered, professing ignorance of an edifice of which he really had read.

"It was a place that was easy enough to get in, but damned hard to get out of. Do you know that you've got yourself in just such a place?"

"I take it 'other way," answered Gordon with a smile, but a quivering at the heart at the significance of the question.

"Hard to get in, I should say."

"You didn't find it very hard. You'll maybe find the 'other way' hard enough if you try trying with me. The first thing I want to know is, what man told you how to get in here?"

"No man," answered Gordon.

"See here, Mr. Thompson, maybe you don't quite know the person you're talking to. Here's something that's good to help the memory." He drew a pistol from his

pocket and laid it on the table before him. "I'll have that man's name now, if you please."

"No man told me," repeated Gordon, looking him full in the eye.

"I've asked that question twice. I never ask but three times," said Henderson, picking up and cocking the pistol, which he presented with deadly aim at the breast of the other. "That man's name now?" he continued, in a cool, devilish tone.

"It will pay you to drop that weapon, Mr. Jack Henderson, which I believe you call yourself," said Gordon, in an even tone, successfully concealing his natural trepidation at the danger he encountered.

"Hast your eyes, man, I'd take ten bullets sooner than be bullied into anything. You say lies don't grow here, and you want to drive me into a lie with a pistol. I tell you again there weren't no man, and you can shoot and be blown."

The defiant manner of Gordon had the effect which he had hoped and expected. Henderson, instead of shooting as he had threatened, asked again:

"No man told you or showed you the way here?"

"Now that's a double question, Mr. Henderson. Yes, I was showed the way."

"Then why in the thunder couldn't you say so? Who led you here?"

"Nobody, again."

"See here, Thompson, are you playing on me?" asked Henderson, in an exasperated tone.

"You're keeping me to the point, and to the point I'm going to stick. There weren't anybody led me, but there were a man showed me."

"His name?" asked the other, in a brief, fierce manner.

"Bill Gillespie, the same man as showed me how to play poker last night."

"Gillespie, eh," said Henderson, with a grim smile at the allusion. "Go on. If you know when you're well off, you'll let out the whole story. Maybe you think I'm a nice crowd to play with. Just raise me once, and see if you haven't raised the devil."

"Well, then, Gillespie's not to blame, for he showed me the way without knowing it himself. You see I was taking a scout in the woods outside here, looking for deer, according to our talk last night. I come up toward Sugar Hill, cause I'd heard it was a prime place for shooting. Well, I'd about got tired of looking for deer, and was thinking of emptying on a squirrel that was frisking his tail in my eyes out there, when who should I see but Bill Gillespie and another fellow just alongside the thicket. They were looking out, but didn't see me, for I was a good spot off. In a minute they turned and sunk right into the thicket. Now that struck me kind of curious, for I'd seen it just after that it was only a jumble of briar bushes, and likely to scratch the fellow that went through. So I come up mighty cur's, but I guessed the trick when I see'd the bit of water running. Think I, Mr. Gillespie, where you can go Ned Thompson can follow, and it's likely there's something worth knowing inside. So in the water I put my feet, and I took the track straight through the bush, till before you could say Jack Robinson I found myself in a place I never dreamt of getting into."

"And you'd better never dream of getting out of it," said Henderson, severely.

"There's many a man got into trouble by wanting to know too much, and that's just your fix. There's no fooling goes down inside these dignins. You've got to show your mettle before you smell flowers again."

"Well," said Gordon, looking curiously around, "I reckon it'll be a mighty smart

much whisky is worse than none. We've got work before us. We'll leave you the run of the cave, Thompson. That is if you've got any sense, and can make the most of it."

"You'll not starve, stranger. We have our regular meals here, and it's about dinner-time. See here, I think you're going to turn out on the square. Just prove yourself the right stripe of a horse and it's all right. But if you go back on us the turning of a hair you're a dead man, if you were here, or if you were a thousand miles away."

Without waiting for an answer, Henderson rose and walked back into the cave.

"Come on," he said, "we'll seal this bargain and wet it in some good whisky."

They entered another passage which, after some devious windings, opened into a smaller apartment than that they had occupied, but, like it, brilliant with stalactites.

No light entered here from without, and the place was illuminated by a lamp that burned on a table in the centre.

The new comer had no eyes for the beauties of the apartment, for the table was garnished with the materials for a meal, and round it sat three men. These were the two whom Gordon had followed into the cave, and the third the tall, black-whiskered man whom we have known as Tom Gillespie, alias Dick Brown, and whose family resemblance to the gambler seemed to declare them brothers.

These men looked up with surprise as the others entered, the gambler leaping to his feet and glaring on Gordon with a fierce expression.

"It's all right, lads," said Henderson. "You can go ahead with your grub. Thompson's one of us, or will be after we've put him through a course of sprouts. Set down, man, if you reason'd wolfish, and pitch in."

Gordon needed no second invitation. He could only keep up his assumed character by a display of boldness and indifference to his surroundings. Simply nodding to the others, he sat down and helped himself liberally to the meat which formed the main staple of the meal, saying—

"Excuse me, gentlemen, but I've had a long scout, and it's made me sort of ravenous."

They all, with little ado, plunged into the meal, these already there casting questioning glances at Henderson, to which he continued utterly indifferent.

Their fresh appetites soon made havoc of the viands, and a bottle of whisky was then set out, to which all paid generous attention. Gordon took care not to be distanced in this particular. He wished to keep his wits fully about him, but felt that it would never do for him to decline the bottle if he hoped to gain credit with these men.

This scene continued for about an hour, the men smoking and drinking profusely, and enlivening their orgy by a number of anecdotes and songs, principally of a ribald and profane character.

Gordon was sufficiently familiar with the class of characters among whom he now was, to be aware of their ordinary subjects of conversation, and to be able to bear his part with credit.

It was evident to himself that he was making a favorable impression, and he used every effort to increase it, aware that his life might depend on his power of keeping up his assumed character.

The feast, which was rapidly degenerating into a delirium, was ended by Henderson taking possession of the nearly empty bottle, and looking it up in a cupboard at the side of the apartment.

"You've had enough, lads," he said. "A little whisky is a good thing. I do

no means of investigation remained to the virtuous prisoner. The armed sentinel prevented him from emerging to the open sunlight without. The absolute darkness and possible danger hindered any research into the interior of the cave.

The taking away of the lamps gave him the idea that it was done to prevent such research, they safely depending on the darkness to keep him within bounds.

Another thought came into his mind. These caverns were often rendered dangerous by running waters, deep wells, and precipitous descents. Might not Henderson have recognized him, and purposely left him free, depending on the natural curiosity of man to lead him deeper into the cave, and precipitate him down some fatal precipice?

Such considerations would have hindered most men from searching further, coupled, too, with the danger of the gang's returning and discovering his attempt.

But more than curiosity impelled him. These were criminals whose objects it was his duty, both to himself and to the community, to discover and to expose. His own fair fame rested on this discovery, and also the repayment to the bank of the funds lost through him, and concerning which he felt a strong sense of obligation.

Besides he had not been forbidden investigation of the cave, and could stand this in the event of being discovered. They had probably considered the desirability of light a sufficient precaution. But he had about him the means of procuring a light, and a length of wax taper, which he had intended for a different purpose, sufficient to burn for several hours.

He therefore, after several hours had elapsed from the disappearance of his new associates, determined, at all hazards, to enter upon this exploration, and depend on his mother wit to help him out of any danger into which he might fall.

But we must leave the details of this adventurous exploit, the dangers incurred, and the results achieved, till some future chapter, and follow the fortunes of our long neglected hero.

At a considerable depth within these caverns, far from any possible influence of the light of day, plunged in eternal darkness so far as any gleam of the solar rays could penetrate its dark recesses, was a small but most beautiful apartment.

The Temple of Beauty, it had been named, even by these rude possessors of the caverns, and the title was not misapplied.

It was now lit with a lamp whose beams flashed back from a most magnificent scene. The vaulted roof was fretted with a pure white frost work, surpassing in intricacy of design the most elaborate work of any Gothic cathedral, and sparkling from the facets of thousands of crystals, till the whole dome seemed set with jewels.

The sides of the room were set with symmetrical half columns, in high relief from the wall, forming niches in which were figures that it would have needed no great stretch of imagination to form into a succession of milk white statues, the alabaster gods of a new pantheon, built by nature's own hand in the heart of the western wilds.

A table, with several chairs, a bed, and a roughly-built closet, occupying one of the openings between two columns, formed the furniture of this room. It had but one avenue of entrance and exit, and this was closed by a strong door, perforated, and with an open square above, and under, to admit of the entrance of air.

This charming prison, for to such a base purpose was it applied, was occupied by the unhappy captive, Maggie Campbell, whom we last saw gazing despairingly on the disappearing form of the friend who sought to rescue her.

Gillespie, her captor, had borne her directly into, after using what he considered the proper measures to avoid leaving a distinguishable trail. He was well acquainted with the shrewd powers of the hunters who might be on his track, and felt it imperative to take every measure to avoid leading them into dangerous closeness to the secret cavern of the gang of which he was a member.

Before entering, he had even taken the precaution to blindfold her eyes, so that she could, by no possibility, learn the secret of the entrance.

The blinding scarf was not removed until he had borne her into the apartment in which we now find her.

She was then released, her hands, eyes, and lips alike being freed from the bonds which had so long restrained speech and motion.

She gazed around the strange scene in which she found herself, with a sense of bewilderment, not unmingled with an involuntary admiration, such as one might feel to behold the wonders of fairy land had been suddenly revealed.

This feeling of surprise, and the charm of the beautiful scene, were sufficient, for the moment, to allay and cause her to forget the distress and indignation which had burned so long with her.

These feelings, however, returned in full force with the first words of her abductor.

"Isn't it a pretty cage to which I've brought my bird?" he asked. "There weren't any use for you to go on so, Maggie. I was a-going to do the square thing with you. I reckon you'll soon begin to see that."

The indignation aroused by his words overcame all other feelings.



and the major was unable to attend

Mrs. Fitzophet had seven children, but

Piper, rising and welcoming him with warmth. "I don't think you have been here these two days."

opportunity was afforded. Mrs. Piper and her daughter went to some evening gathering, and the major was unable to attend



Mr. Piper shrieked and went into a semitant. The young ladies shrieked and sobbed. Mr. Pys shrunk up to nothing in his discomfort. The yellow man stared. Edward Parkyn turned to Mr. Grano, and began to talk to him in an undertone, when the room was interrupted by sounds of woe. Mr. Piper had suddenly leaped from her chair, pounced upon the unhappy Bobby, and began shaking him to mummy.

"It's all your fault, you wicked, ungrateful monkey!" she raved, boxing his ears as she said. "Why did you leave him to himself on that bench? To do what he liked?"

"Oh-o-o-oh! Slap! slap! slap!"

"He-o-o-o-oh!" howled Bobby. "Twasn't me. Who was going to stop still in that unfenced square forever? Oh-o-o-o-oh!"

"Our pains and sorrows are over, William," whispered Laura, with a sobbing sigh. "We can pay the rent now; and the children will have enough to eat."

"My dear wife, yes. You told me to trust in God."

### Noble Ancestry.

An English paper says:—

"It is an amusing speculation to look back and compute what number of men and women among the ancients, eluded their endeavors to the production of a single modern. Thus, a present nobleman, or instance, is 1; his father and mother are 2; his grandfather and grandmother are 4; his great-grandfather and great-grandmother were 8; the next predecessors will count 16; and, at the twenty-first remove, the figures reach the astounding number of 1,098,576. Here are only computed twenty-one generations, which, allowing three generations to one hundred years, carry us back no farther than the Roman Empire, at which time such present nobleman—to extend all ignoble blood from his veins—ought to have had nine million, forty-eight thousand, five hundred and seventy-six noble ancestors! Carry this reckoning back three hundred years farther, and the number amounts to above five hundred millions, which are not even extant at any one time upon the earth, thus showing that the pretension of such purity of blood in ancient families is mere jargon."

[The above mode of calculation is a very odd instance of how figures can be made to lie. For it would prove that there were billions of times more people in the world the time of Adam than now.—Ed. of Post.]

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J. E. BROWN, Buffalo, N. Y.:  
Dear Sir:—It is with pleasure I make this statement to you that after taking medicine for twenty years for Catarrh, I feel my Catarrh Remedy effected a cure, so that it has not troubled me two years.

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she said: "I was sure of it. And see that there was reason in my terror-shrinking from that man. I used to fear for vengeance; but now—ah, well,



let him go, let him go. In the world to which I am going, it will be mercy, and not vengeance, for sinful humanity.

## CHAPTER LIX.

UNRECOVERED.

When the morning  
Inevitably and the torturing hour  
Came up to punish.

Unrecovered, unreprieved, unrelieved.

And where had Austin Bertrand hidden himself all this while that the police were seeking him, and detectives lying in wait at every place from which it was likely he would attempt to escape? He seemed to have totally vanished into the fog, and was swallowed up altogether, for no tidings of him, nor of any one answering in the least to his description, could be heard anywhere, though a large reward was offered for his apprehension.

As we have seen, he had burst from the detaining hands of Lambert, the detective, and knocking aside the two policemen, he rushed straight forward, neither knowing nor caring which way he went, so long as it was out of their reach.

Down one street and up another he flew with hurrying steps, blindly taking the first turning that he came to, anxious only to place distance between himself and the Nemesis which had at last overtaken his career of crime.

"Let me but once get clear of this infernal city," he muttered to himself, "and I will defy them all. I have money sufficient to take me anywhere, and there are plenty of safe hiding places in the world."

He had bank notes to a considerable amount about him, contrary to Frank's idea, and he resolved to make for one of the stations, and take the first train that left, no matter where its destination might be.

In a very few minutes he lost all trace of where he was—every street and turning was alike in the dim obscurity. Not a lamp was to be seen except when standing close beneath it, and the flaring links carried by the street boys were but so many gleams of light dancing about in the thick gloom. And so Austin Bertrand, or rather Jasper Blossom, went on, taking no count of time, nor where he was, not daring to address the passers-by, lest his voice should betray him to a pursuer.

Hang it! this confounded fog must clear some time," he said. "But, after all, it will bother them as much as me, and more, for I have got the start of them. I wonder which way I have been coming, and where I have got to now. I thought I was making for London Bridge—I might be in time to catch the tidal train—but, hang me, if I can imagine where I have got to! I can't hear any sound of wheels or horses' feet. Bah! the whole city is a huge grave to-night. But I have bailed them, ha! ha! and I'll come back again sometime to pay off old scores. I will, by—"

But the next word only vented itself in a harsh, guttural scream for help. His advancing foot had found no firmer resting place than the thin air, and with a heavy plunge he sank head foremost into the cold, rushing river.

A thousand lights seemed to flash before his eyes, a thousand torrents to roar in his ears, as the dark waters closed above his head, and he threw out his arms in wild dismay. He swam a little—enough to keep himself afloat in calm water; but the tide was now running swiftly out, and he lay like a reed at the mercy of the current.

He tried to shout as he rose to the surface, but the pitiless water seemed to choke his utterance, and he could only gasp. He fancied he could see waving lights and hear voices on the spot from which he had fallen; but the merciless stream bore him on to sure and swift destruction, and all chance of safety or of rescue was lost in a moment. There was nothing around the despairing wretch except water, and, thick, dense fog, and again he sank, to rise once more as an eddying wave took him, like a broken toy, and dashed him against the buttress of a bridge with a sickening crash.

No more rising in this world for him. He was the sport of the current now, and rapidly it bore him along—now gently, as if in mockery of the forfeit life, anon with a fierce swirl, sucking its ghastly victim beneath the keel of a heavily laden cargo, and bringing it up, more ghastly than death had made it, on the other side.

And then it flung it about as though in wild triumph, dashed it against first one obstacle, then another, till nearly all semblance of humanity was beaten out of the once handsome face, and finished by dragging it down to seven fathoms depth, sinking it hideously foul with the impurities of the river's bed.

And so through the hazy night, Jasper Blossom, alias Austin Bertrand, went on his involuntary pilgrimage, past haunts and places where he had spent many pleasant, happy hours, envied and envied as wealthy and prosperous. Under the bridge he went, and again he sank, to rise once more as the sun rose and the fog lifted, and day returned bright and clear upon the world, where his place would know him no more.

And the morning shone bright and clear upon the mighty river in whose bosom lies hidden the solution of so many terrible secrets, and beamed upon the poor wreck of humanity that had so lately been a living, sentient being.

It was several days before the corpse was found, where the receding tide had left it, tired of its plaything, at the mouth of a sewer, and there some of the men who make their living from the deep water, by robbing the corpses it has made its own, found him, and plundered him before they gave information at the nearest police station.

His card case was found in his pocket, and gave the clue to his name and address, and Frank Vavasour was summoned to identify him. His features were too swollen for recognition, but his clothes were sufficient, and a coroner's inquest was summoned, to settle the stereotyped verdict of "found drowned, but whether by accident or otherwise there is no evidence to show."

His left funds enough among his effects at the lodge to bury him and satisfy all claims, and Frank, at Claudia's instigation, took upon himself the arrangement of the dead man's affairs. All was settled and arranged quietly, and with as much respect for the dead as though the loathsome and disfigured corpse had been one of God's noblest creatures.

It was a painful task to break all this dreadful news to Claudia; but she bore it with greater fortitude than might have been expected. Alma was with her when the news of Austin Bertrand's death reached her, and it was from Lady Macdonnell's lips that the actress heard the awful fate of her persecutor.

She received the news of the terrible end of the man who had been so inveterate an enemy to both her parents with composure, but with an evident feeling of relief.

"I do not rejoice at his death," she said to Frank; "but I am glad he has been spared the shameful end that would have befallen him had he been captured. I used to wish for revenge upon him. I think I must have been very wicked then. I wished, evil wishes, and see, Frank, how terribly they have come to pass."

"Evil wishes, Claudia," they were alone together—one of the few precious interviews which came now and then like glimpses of the Heaven toward which she was hastening, they seemed to Claudia's dying heart. These times of converse with the man she loved so dearly were becoming rare now, for she was almost entirely confined to her own room, coming down-stairs only at such intervals as she could bear the transit from one part of the house to another.

She did not suffer so much; now and then paroxysms of pain, and fits of coughing which seemed to rack her whole body, would try and alarm those about her; but they did not occur often, nor last for any length of time. But she wasted day by day, like a fading flower over which the chill winds blow too roughly.

Frank had taken her hand, and was looking earnestly into her face—she answered his questioning words with a smile.

"Yes, evil wishes," she said. "I did not want to discover your dead wish, no matter how, and have not yet been answered most terribly. Did I not wish to be freed from the persecution of Alma's husband, and was I not? Most fearfully! Ah! Frank, our wishes, if they are not good ones, recoil upon ourselves some time."

"Let us talk of something else, dear Claudia. Forget those horrors if you can; no more will come to you."

"No, no more in this world, Frank. Neither joy nor sorrow will affect me much longer. I have but one wish unfulfilled on earth now."

"And that is—"

"That I could see you happy before I leave you. You know that I loved you. I am dying, and may speak of it. Had I lived, I should have been jealous—oh, so jealous—of the love you could not give me being bestowed upon another, but I shall die the happier for knowing you are blessed with Alma's love, and she with yours."

"But I cannot speak to her about it, Claudia, she is so changed from what she was. I sometimes think that her eyes glow through has altered her very nature, and made her hard and cold. She is gentle and kind outwardly, but not the loving, hearted girl I knew once, when our hopes and fears were one."

"Remember she has been the unlamented wife of a bad man since then," Claudia replied, with a sad smile. "And she is now that most desolate of beings, a widow, whose heart knows not the mounting which springs from love. You must make allowances for her, Frank. I know she loves you—fondly and truly; you must let me see her your wife before I die."

"I have not dared to hint at such a thing to her as yet."

"Ah, but I have, and I shall live to see it come about. I sometimes wish that I might see another spring—that violet, whose heart knows not the mounting which springs from love. I shall never see my favorite flower again."

Her favorite flowers, Alma! it gave Frank a sharp pang at his heart to hear her speak of them. How often had he seen her before a crowded audience, her eyes sparkling with pleasure at their applause, and her hair crowned with the pale blossoms which she loved so well.

No, she would never see them any more. In all human probability the grass would grow above her head long before they lifted up their little petals to greet the sunshine which called them into being.

The autumn waned slowly away, and the chill blasts of coming winter whistled through the desolate streets, and stripped the trees in the squares of all their leafy coverings, and still Claudia Wynne lingered on; but it was a question of days, not months, now, when the end would come. There was no hope that she would see the dawn of another year, no question of her again leaving her chamber until the day when she should change to the green radiance of the world beyond the grave.

But the dying actress was not forgotten by her old companions of the stage, though the public, as fickle as it had been enthusiastic, scarcely ever called to mind the name of its former goddess.

But her professional friends were widely distant. Actors and actresses come only forward in times of sickness and calamity, with help and comfort, and had Claudia needed assistance, she would have received it freely and generously. As it was, her old comrades of the Elysium made frequent visits to Baywater, and testified by inquiries, and many little tokens of remembrance, their loving interest in her welfare.

One delightfully was a constant visitor, and to him the dying woman was indebted for the choicest fruits and rarest flowers that money could buy. For a long time she was in very deed so near her end, insisting that all she required was rest, and that another year would see her resuming her old place amongst them. In the enjoyment of such health himself, the theatrical death never came between him and his happiness, but even he was fain to confess, toward the last, that no physician's hand could stay the last conqueror of all.

Claudia saw all her friends as long as she had strength for conversation, but there came a time when the door was closed to her, and she was left alone, and there was nothing left to them but the remembrance of her loving farewell.

Mrs. Everfield and Alma tended her with the utmost solicitude, and Dorothy, poor faithful heart, would never leave her side. Frank Vavasour came and went daily, having removed to a lodging close by, from whence he could be summoned instantly, so near was the end.

One only thing disturbed Claudia. She had not been able to persuade Frank to speak to Alma, and she dreaded that if her influence were once removed they might drift further apart, and she resolved to take the initiative herself.

"Yes," she murmured one afternoon, when she was feeling rather stronger, "I will speak to-night, and Heaven grant it may be to some purpose."

## CHAPTER LX.

SPRING FLOWERS.

Our very hopes behind our fears,  
We thought let us what she might,  
And nothing when she died.

It was evening of the same day, and Claudia Wynne lay on her couch by the side of a bright fire in her own little room adjoining the bed chamber, for she never came down-stairs now. Alma was sitting opposite to her, gazing sorrowfully upon the sharp outlines disease had shaped her features to, while Frank was reading, in a

low tone, a chapter from the Book which was the invalid's sole comfort now; an expression of deep peace on her face, and her eyes were closed.

Presently he finished, and closing the book, sat looking dreamily at Alma, and there was silence for a while; but Claudia rose the first to break it.

"Come closer to me, Alma," she said, with a kind smile, "and you, too, Frank. I want to speak with both of you."

Alma did as she requested, and Frank coming round to the couch, the invalid took a hand in each of hers, and said—

"You told me yesterday that I had not a wish on earth unfulfilled, and yet—"

"Yet what, dear Claudia?" Alma asked, with tender solicitude, though her heart beat thick and fast, for she had observed a glance pass between the other two which partly warned her of what was coming.

"I must recall those words," continued Claudia. "I have one wish as yet ungratified."

"What is it, dear? Can we not obtain it for you?"

"I think so."

"You shall have it then."

"Ah, Alma, make no rash promises—you don't know what it is."

"But you will tell us?"

"That is soon done. I want to see you two married."

"Ah, Claudia!" murmured Alma, but Frank spoke never a word, only watching Claudia intently as she bent her head on Claudia's lap to hide her burning blushes from his view.

"What is the prospect so very terrible?" asked Claudia. "Can't you please me by letting me see you married before I go? It would make me far happier. He told me, too, though he has lacked courage to speak to you."

Alma looked up at her lover, and read the truth in the impassioned gaze he cast upon her.

"Have I not waited long enough?" he said, in a low whisper, and she answered not to him, but to Claudia.

"If it will give you pleasure, yes," she replied, with a smile, "but I shall never yield to him, and drawing her yielding form to his, sealed the contract with a loving kiss.

"I feared so much to ask you," he said. "My darling, how happy you have made me."

"It is for Claudia's sake I have consented," she answered, with a look which plainly told, however, that the pleasure would not be confined to her. "What ever she wishes must be done."

"And quickly, too," interrupted Claudia. "I should not like you to carry the remembrance of a death bed among the memories of your wedding day, and mine is not far distant. Heaven bless you for your consent, my dear," she continued, pressing her wasted lips against Frank's hand. "You'll not mind going without the splendor of a grand wedding to please an invalid's whim, will you?"

"I would do anything—sacrifice anything to please you. What do I not owe you? more than I can ever repay."

And so it was arranged that they should be married by special license in the little drawing room of Claudia's villa. There were to be no troops of admiring friends, no grand breakfast, or bridal attire, and only one bridesmaid, who would be the bride of death herself—Mrs. Everfield and Dorothy would act as witnesses.

It does not take long to arrange the preliminaries of such a ceremony, and the next day, although Alma had pleaded earnestly for a little longer delay, in which she could have had her hair cropped and her even Mrs. Everfield telling her that her hesitation was out of place—the very next day the clergyman of the parish, who had been extremely attentive to Claudia, arrived with his clerk, and was ushered into the room, which had been fitted for the ceremony. Claudia's couch had been already wheeled in, and covered with a white sheet, and she lay in a pure white dress, looking so bright and happy that it was hard to believe that she was dying.

Lovely—with an ethereal beauty belonging not to this earth—she wore no ornament in her dark hair, over which Dorothy with a foreigner's love of costume, had thrown a rich lace veil.

Presently Mrs. Everfield came in, and the clergyman retired to robe himself, while Alma and Frank took their places at the exteriorized altar.

The tying of the knot which is to last "till death do us part," is not a very lengthy affair, and before even Claudia's face showed any trace of fatigue the two, so long separated, were man and wife.

It was a simple, solemn ceremony, which none present ever forgot, and when it was over Claudia embraced the newly-made man and wife tenderly, for the second time pressing on Frank's lips a kiss, pure as a sister's.

He understood full well the source of the tears which filled her eyes when she embraced him—how deeply she had loved, and how unselfishly, and his own cheeks were wet with her tears then.

"We will leave you now, dear Claudia, for awhile," he said, laying her back gently on the couch. "You need repose after this excitement."

"Yes, go now," she answered, "but return to me soon. Let me have both of you with me while I live. You will have each other many happy years, I hope, while I shall be laid to rest in the grave."

They left the room softly, and the dying girl fell into bitter weeping. Her purpose was accomplished, and the two she loved so well were joined together for life, but in this moment of approaching death, life had never seemed so sweet to her as now, and she wept hysterically, till her tears seemed to relieve her, and she fell asleep.

The snow lay thick and white upon the ground, and church bells were ringing out a joyous welcome to the day of days when should the star over Bethlehem herald the birth of the world's Redeemer, and as the merry peal rang out upon the still night air, Claudia Wynne lay dying.

For days they had watched her as she lay, placid and happy, thinking that each hour would be her last, but ever and anon she roused and spoke to those about her.

There was no suffering, no wild struggle with the grim conqueror to afflict the hearts of the watchers; all was calm, peace, and gentle sinking to rest, as a babe may drop to sleep in the mother's arms. When she awoke to-night, and when it was darkened room to her old friends at the Elysium, and many a little trinket found its way to the humble members of Mr. Gough's company—people who never dreamed of being remembered by the once brilliant and successful actress.

She had remembered everybody in her will, leaving a sum to her faithful old nurse, which was sufficient to set her forever at liberty. To Alma she bequeathed her jewels, no mean legacy, for amongst them were numbered royal gifts of wondrous beauty and great intrinsic value. Frank Vavasour received the cloak which had played so memorable a part in restoring his early love to him, and Mr. Goughly broke down and cried piteously

over a magnificent diamond ring, which reached him only a few days before her death, with a slip of paper, on which he had inscribed a few feebly-traced characters in Claudia's handwriting.

The remainder of her property, and she was rich, even for her short span of popularity, was divided—one half to Frank, the other to the different charities connected with her profession, in equal proportions.

But this was not known until after her death. Frank did not know it on that snowy Christmas Eve when he jumped hastily out of a cab at the villa door.

He carried something in his hand, carefully wrapped up in silver paper, which he examined anxiously as soon as he entered the house.

It was a simple bunch of flowers, pale primroses surrounded by their leaves, neither so fragrant nor so bright in hue as if they had been gathered in their native hedgerows, but living, scented buds of spring for all that.

"I promised she should see one again," he murmured, "and I have kept my word."

He was about to go up-stairs when Alma met him.

"What is it?" he asked, anxiously, for her cheeks were stained with tears and her eyes were swollen.

"Come at once," she answered, "you are just in time."

No need to ask the meaning of her words, and he followed her without speaking, the flowers in his hand, and would be till the veil dropped. She recognized the flowers too, and her eyes turned to them eagerly.

In time! ah, there could be no question that the time was very near. The shadow of the dark valley was already on Claudia's face when he entered the room, though her eyes were lit with a ray of the brightness which lay beyond it.

Frank leaned over her, and touched her hand.

"Claudia," he whispered, "do you know me?"

"Know me? Yes. He was ever in her heart," she murmured. "Let me see the flowers."

He lifted her on the couch, and her head rested upon his shoulder. Alma stood looking sorrowfully on, while Dorothy, unable to control her emotion, crouched at the foot of the sofa, with her head buried in the clothes.

"You have brought spring with you," she said to Frank, in choking accents. "Sweet spring! sweet flowers!"

And then—ah! who can tell when the imprisoned soul flies from its mortal body? Claudia Wynne had spoken her last words on earth, and Frank Vavasour held in his arms only her lifeless clay.

THE END.

## A WOMAN'S VOW.

BY MARY E. WOODSON.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ANOTHER VISITOR TO N.

It was a bitterly cold morning, even for the early spring, and Lady Melbourne was impatient that Angela should telegraph and defer her return; but she would listen to no excuse.

"Her dearest friend was alone in her home," she said, "her guardian had sent for her, and she must go."

"I am confident that Earl Templeton, with angry force through the streets all day, and second dispatch if he could think it possible for you to be so imprudent as to start," said Lady Millicent.

But Earl Templeton had just rung for Carlos to his room when Angela had seated herself in the train.

The Hon. Douglas Stewart was indignant to hear of her going on a grand excursion that day and could not leave.

"But I shall stop at your home when I leave London," he whispered.

"Pray take care of yourself," every one was saying, as the train gave a preparatory start.

"I have no fears. You may be sure I will do that," she answered, laughingly, glad to be on the sharp wind that swept with angry force through the streets all day, and away from the obnoxious hackney coachmen who had made her quite deaf by their noise.

The lunge of the train had only been a trial of steam power, however, and the long line of coaches stood still for one moment more. And Angela looking out, saw Lady Millicent Melbourne's carriage flashing with the sunburst of her coat of arms, in the rising sunlight, just beyond the window.

Douglas Stewart was looking back at that moment, and she waved her hand. But there was another loud whistle at the moment—the nipping air poured in with fresh vigor. Lady Millicent, the Hon. Douglas Stewart and the rest seemed like automata, jerked away as with a spring. Then a house and lamp posts outside were affected as the trees and hills are reported to have been in the olden time, by the strains of Orpheus, and to be dancing in a mad gallop, in opposite parallel lines to that on which she was starting.

One, two, three; the last of the station outposts flashed out of sight, and soon the blue-black smoke from the engine began to show its dark clouds over country farm-houses, meadows, woods and solitudes with panoramic rapidity.

Angela Trevelyan's face, as we have said, was a bewilderingly beautiful one, even to those whose dull perceptions are never awakened by the subtle witchery of expression, that has greater inherent power than absolute fulsome beauty of form. Never had she appeared more beautiful than on this morning. A copyist in art—any of the mere imitators, would have transferred her face to canvas; but it would have been for the clearly-cut Greek features, that even on mathematical principles must have seemed a triumph to the most rigid precision. Paul Veronese would have worshipped her forever, and while her hair, or some distinct feature of her face, with the ideal delineations of his innumerable works. Apelles, who "painted for posterity," would have been content to labor patiently for years over one of his few but still famous portraits, could he have caught and transferred the sundown, hewer, translucent light of those large dark eyes, as they appeared to the man who had been sitting near her for the last half hour, watching the lights and shadows that chased each other in their shining depths like dancing faeries. There was something entrancing to this man in the fresh upturned face, with its speaking lines of sentiment, nay, as yet almost undeveloped thought and passion.

He was contrasting the diaphanous splendor of her natural complexion with the small, bright brown freckle on the left of her chin; "Thank Heaven," he muttered, "it is not count-plaster," and the heavy lids of shining hair that could have left no room for a modern artificial coiffure, with the imported combs and

chignons that add so largely to the sum of feminine perfection in town life.

The man who sat near her—tall, dark and beautiful himself, as few men in real life are—had been watching her with a look of terrible, eager, intense admiration; a look that would have caused Douglas Stewart to frown indignantly, and Earl Templeton to take him by the ears. Perhaps he had imagined that the intensity of his gaze would mesmerically attract her own; but he was growing restlessly impatient with vexation, when at last, as if wearied with the outer prospect, or the introspection in which she had been indulging, she looked up.

"Do you know whether we shall stop long at Finsbury, where I shall have to change cars?"

"Only twenty minutes," he responded, glancing at his jewelled watch. "You will go on to N., I believe."

He was amused at the arched brow; the little look of surprise upon her face.

"Will your guardian certainly meet you?" he continued.

"I hope so," replied Angela, with a quick start. "Do you know him?"

"No; but I think I can guess his name. May I try?"

"If you choose. Yes."

"The Hon. Earl Templeton."

"Then if you do not know him, I am sure you do not me," said Angela, with another arch of her brows. "Are you a necromancer?"

"Something in the Faustus order, eh?" he said, with a frown. "Well, I have German blood in my veins, though my swarthy complexion might suggest to you an inhabitant from the banks of the Rhine, or the Guadalupe, rather than the Rhine. However, to return to our 'monsters,' every one has heard of Earl Templeton. He is public property in England. Are you travelling alone?"

"Yes. At least under the protecting 'egis of the train conductor.'"

"Then, Miss Trevelyan, in his absence let me modestly offer you the shelter of my wing, as I am going directly to N—to see him. I may be able to serve you, and you will secure me an inalienable right to an extraordinarily comfortable seat."

"Then," said Angela, "it is really I who must protect you."

"As you will," he answered, with a shrug of his Apollonian shoulders. "I don't know which would be the pleasanter in this case, protection conferred or received. But will you consent?"

"That depends," answered Angela, mischievously. "As the case is not yet decided, I consider ourselves under mutual obligations to entertain each other, and—suppose I, for example, should prefer reading my book?"

"No warmer ever studied the sky at the prospect of a storm as I should do your face for the first shadow of weariness. And then, Miss Trevelyan, I should be able to see an Eastern slave."

"You address me by name," said Angela. "How did you know it?"

"I guessed it."

He smiled at the serious look she assumed in retribution for her bluffed inquiry, while she took up a volume of Greek and gold from beneath her travelling shawl. "You are provided with a weapon of offence, I see."

"Say rather of defence," she replied, with a flash of mischief from her dark eyes.

"In this case they are synonymous terms," he answered. "But I was reminded of a moment since of an indecorum on my part, at which your position will not allow you to hint, though you were ten times a daughter of Eve. I am fully aware of your name and distinction; while you might address me as 'Herr Von Snidit,' for instance."

"What's in a name?" she answered, readily. "Positive appellations are often flimsy and prosaic."

"You are far from your may dub me Mr. John Smith, I must beg you to glance at my card."

He slipped a bit of pearl paper from a jewelled card-case which he carried and held it toward her, and looking up she read—

"Hugo Karl Schiller Clare."

"You are not Schiller Clare, the brother of my friend Evelyn Clare?" cried Angela, in pretty, delighted astonishment.

"Yes, and you will now see that I had a double right to know you; first from your picture, which Evelyn was unwise enough to be ever exhibiting, and secondly, because every fashionable who stops in London hears such a description of Miss Trevelyan, that he must know her the moment he beholds her from all others."

"And Evelyn is at my home?" repeated Angela. "To which, of course, you are going. You were quite naughty not to tell me who you were at first, instead of frightening me with stories of the Rhine, and leaving me to fear that I might be making an improper acquaintance."

"I spoke the simple truth," he answered. "My mother was—as you may have heard Evelyn said—the daughter of a German baron, and I am a collateral descendant of the immortal literature Schiller, which you would expect me to say from the similarity of our names, whether it were truth or not. I am, however, familiarly known to my friends, and perhaps to you as 'Karl.'"

"Short and sweet," said Angela, with a laugh.

"Thank you for looking at me once more, now that you know who I am," he replied, with one of his blindest smiles.

"Your eyes are the electric fire that infuses courage into my sluggish nature. The battery was masked when their lashes were lowered, and a sense of chivalry forbade my attacking you—unless you provoked me beyond endurance. You will see Evelyn the same dauntless British soul; so we must not deprive her of the pleasure of telling you everything by talking about her now. We will then drop Miss Clare until circumstances force her upon us. You have a new book. May I inquire what it is?"

"Can you not guess the title of that also?" she asked, laughing.

"No. I am only clairvoyant where thinking, sentient human nature is concerned. I will not attempt to 'guess' that."

"It is not necessarily a new book, even in a woman's hands, because it is a new edition," she said.

"I'll confess," he returned, approvingly. "But you will not afford me the poor consolation of knowing for whose thoughts you were about to resign my own? It is wrong to suppose that mental diseases, like those of the body, are not contagious. To be shut up for hours and even days, with closely contagious stupidity, is as bad as to be locked in a room with spilled oil of remorse. I had struggled against it all night, but was tripping into the prevailing comatose state in spite of myself when you came in this morning, and I gasped for breath, as a man so situated must inevitably do, when he catches the first inspiration of the free air of Heaven. My respiratory organs are not yet fully restored, or I might have astonished you with an original observation myself, in all this time."

"Darling you are confident of success, I give you permission to interrupt me," replied Angela, lifting the obnoxious volume threateningly. "But perhaps it is my duty to warn you, that you would do so at great risk. Your rival is 'The Attic Philosopher.'"

"Ah," he answered, quickly, "from the French of Emile Souvestre. Have you not read it before?"

"No. But looking into it yesterday I saw that it was just the sort of book I always enjoy when travelling alone. There is no crowding of incident, absorbing one's attention to the entire oblivion of objects and circumstances which one should not fail to notice. A detached thought, a single felicity of expression, and there is food for contemplation, and I go into reverie over it, until erratic fancy embraces everything from yonder rugged scarp of mountains to the emerald ring you wear."

He felt the spell of her thousand witcheries tenfold enhanced as she spoke, glancing up at him, and then out at the swiftly receding scenery; her face so irradiant with soul that it seemed almost transfigured.

"Yes," he replied, softly, "it is just as you say. It is the reverie of a poet, but a poet in the desert. The wings of his fancy soar unto weariness, but there is no other resting-place than the arid, burning sands at last."

"Say," she replied, with an enthusiasm that entranced him, "if we could all be like that! I should like to see you reaching that condition for which I can find no name—the Greeks call it *stoisiein*, and Monsieur Souvestre, philosophy—the condition



prompted thoughts dire as those of Macbeth, when Duncan slumbered for a night as he had purposed in his castle.

For struggle as he may have done, in all the past, to hide the (to him) appalling truth, in this hour, as he beheld her standing there, he knew that he—the guardian who had promised dispassionately to watch over her life's happiness—loved her, as he had never loved the mother in his youth—loved her as he had never loved of this grand, airy, after all, this master passion of our souls, in all the vanished years—loved her, as he believed, against reason and against hope, blindly, madly, deathlessly, with a passion that would have made him offer up his heart's blood in unheeded libations at her feet, while from his pallid lips a cry went up to Heaven for aid and strength.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

## STILL ON THE TRAIL.

And the days and weeks went by, and still Angela Treasylan dreamed not in her innocence of the feelings she had inspired in her guardian's breast. He had not struggled all these years in vain to be content with this living agony and smile still, and be all things for her sake. Even Evelyn Clare, with all her sharp worldliness, had not fathomed his secret. All her efforts to penetrate the polished steel of his invincible armor had been to no purpose.

And Karl had sat and talked and smoked and walked and ridden with this never-changing, seemingly passionless hero of select circles, without ever dreaming that here might be the formidable rival who should at last blight his own hopes, with those of a score of other distinguished aspirants. For Karl, the gay and debonaire, formerly as frolic as he had been unscrupulous in his loves, had also concentrated upon Angela Treasylan the affections and aspirations of a lifetime, and was determined to spare no efforts to win her hand. He had begun to believe, too, that he might have reasonable hopes of success. He was young, handsome, talented and wealthy, holding an unquestionable position in society, and as yet he could see no reason why his own chances should not hold good amongst the best of them.

And how did Angela herself regard him? Perhaps it would have been difficult for her to decide just at this time. She had found him always pleasing and agreeable, full of anecdotes of the people he had met, sometimes severe in satire, and ever alternating from grave to gay, from lively to severe, with a versatility of talent that could not fail to amuse her. And sometimes, of late, she had begun to feel in need of diversion. Every one could see that she was slowly losing that really merry freshness of childhood—the gaiety of the heart—that had characterized her on her first introduction into society. Was she falling in love?

Karl Clare asked himself the question, and believing that he would be the object of her choice, secretly hoped that she was. Evelyn also rallied her, but could come to no conclusion.

"I cannot fathom this great master of romance, and of those stern realities called law and politics," she said half-seriously to Angela one morning, as they sat in the boudoir of the latter. "I have tried your guardian dear, to no purpose. He has performed all the duties of a host to perfection. He has escorted me to places of amusement, has been enthusiastic in his praises of my music, has been ever ready in compliment, and even with the double entendre of sentiment, that might mean nothing or everything to one less a woman of the world than myself; but he has never surprised me by the most unpleasant stroke of policy that he has been called on to use in years, for I am quite sure he does not even like me."

"Nay," said Angela warmly, "I am sure you do him a great injustice. He would like you because I do."

"Silly child! Do you flatter yourself so much?"

Angela blushed vividly.

"I know, Eva, that he loves me very tenderly."

"And I am as thoroughly persuaded, ma chere," replied Miss Clare, "that he loves nothing but his own worldly, ambitious schemes. He has the head of Antinous, and the brain of—Monsieur de Talleyrand, for example, but he has no heart."

"No, Evelyn, no," cried Miss Treasylan. "I will not hear that, even from you. He has no heart; when the grandeur of his soul often makes me feel how little and mean is all the rest of the world in comparison! My greatest grief is that I cannot comprehend him—that his simplest thoughts are so far beyond me. I should like to feel that while I have all the watchful devotion that the tenderest of brothers could give a sister, my companionship might be some pleasure or comfort to him."

"You are enthusiastic, as all women are when his name is mentioned," said Miss Clare, thoughtfully. "Perhaps it is well that my own heart was given away when I came here, and that I am not to be married soon, or I too might have sighed in wretchedness for the remainder of my life. He is still fantastically handsome, is he not?"

"Yes," replied Angela, unhesitatingly, "and that is the least of all his attractions. He is so great and good! And Evelyn, I am sure, as prosperous as he seems to have been, that he has suffered greatly in his life."

"That is your romantic imagination," said Miss Clare, with a meaning smile. "Do you remember your school valedictory on 'Hero Worship,' that even the premeditated so highly? Bear it carefully in mind, my dear, when I am gone, for you are in great danger."

"How? I do not comprehend you," returned Angela, with a bewildered look.

"Then I will enlighten you," replied her friend, seriously; "but the time is not far distant when you will recall all that I have said. You may write to me about it."

"I fear you will always be too deep for me," replied Angela, laughing; "but there is my guardian's bell, and it is time we were dressing for luncheon." And the two young ladies retired to their separate rooms.

"I wonder," thought Miss Clare, meditatively, "if Angela can be as innocent as she seems? Yet it must be. She is not yet adept enough in the ways of the world to hide her feelings from me. And, poor child, she will awaken full soon. I must warn Karl to be on his guard."

In the meantime Earl Templeton had been spending some hours of the morning busily writing. The door of his room, leading into the library, stood ajar, and his pale, classic face, with the broad, intellectual brow, was turned in profile toward it. No one seeing him thus, in the privacy of his room, could have failed to note the prevailing expression of melancholy stamped upon every feature. He might banish it at will, to call up the courtly smile, or to give utterance to the blandishments of the courtesier before the world, but here every line of the proud face told

of a great heart crushed by its burden of woe.

It was thus that Angela had seen him so often of late, when strolling into the library for a moment she had looked in on him through the open door; and seeing, had been touched with a tender pity, until she had gone forth again with the shadow on her own fair face, wondering what he was, and vainly wishing that he would deem her worthy to share the secret of his great trouble, whatever it might be.

And Karl Clare, standing this morning in the embrasure of the library window opposite, marvelled at this, to him, wholly new and softened light in the great man's face, and felt at the moment a love and reverence for him that he had never awarded to man before. But at the moment that he strove to analyze it, Templeton looked up, and seeing him, frowned slightly, hesitated an instant, and came in to him with his habitual cold polish of manner and look.

"Forgive me," said Karl, with easy grace. "I had requested a private interview with you at eleven, and I came in without announcement, expecting to find you here."

"True," returned Templeton, formally. "It is I who should beg pardon. I was engaged, and as usual under such circumstances, the moments flew by unheeded. I am, looking up at a bronze clock above the door, several minutes past the hour, and, Mr. Clare, pray consider me at your service as long as you will."

"Nay," answered the young man, with a slight flush upon his handsome face. "I think you have already guessed my business here, or at any rate it is soon told. Mr. Templeton, with your calm penetration you must have seen long ago that I love your ward, Miss Treasylan, and that it is of her I would speak." In spite of his efforts to control himself, the young man's gray hands and his tremor betrayed the intensity of his emotion. The smile of derision that half rose to Templeton's lips was suppressed; but the cold, fathomless eyes looked up at him without one ray of sympathy.

"You have my utmost attention, Mr. Clare."

"Then, sir," cried the young man, "there is only one other remark necessary. Have I your permission to speak to Miss Treasylan in person—to tell her of my hopes?"

"You have hope, then?"

"Life could not be borne without it," he exclaimed, passionately. "Yet that question from you sounded like my death knell. Do you think I have been too presumptuous?"

"You are mistaken in your first assertion," replied Templeton, slowly. "And for the last, I should be presumptuous to decide. But, Mr. Clare, I have heard of you as involved in many similar affairs before. Are you quite sure that this will be more lasting?"

"My God! how dead to the allurement of woman's charms you must be, to be so cold to look at Miss Treasylan and then suggest a thought of infidelity!" cried Karl. "Whether scorned or accepted, I shall worship Miss Treasylan to the hour of my death."

"I have said nothing of her," replied Templeton, with a momentary look of haughtiness, "only that three months ago you were swearing the same thing to Miss Hamilton of Dares."

"I have sent back her letters and ring—"

"Cease!" said Templeton, haughtily. "I do not ask for your confidence in other matters, nor would I impute that Miss Treasylan might not hold even your volatile nature in perpetual thrall. I only wished to remind you of a fact which I suppose you have not forgotten—that you are dealing with me now, and not with Hugh Hamilton. I know your position, Mr. Clare, your wealth and your prospects, and against them I can say nothing. Your wish is, then, to speak to Miss Treasylan in person?"

"Yes."

Earle Templeton rang a silver bell, and Carlos looked in.

"Send Juliette to Miss Treasylan, and say that, if agreeable, I should be pleased to see her a few moments here."

The man bowed and withdrew, and Templeton and his guest sat, each with a book in hand, until Angela in all her glorious beauty, which had never impressed either of the two more forcibly than now, came into the room. It is needless to say that neither of them had read. But Templeton had never seemed less moved than when he advanced to meet her and took her hand.

"My dear ward," he said, "you know under what circumstances you were left to me—your happiness to be the most sacred charge of my life. I do not think you will require me to assure you again that I do regard it as pre-eminently my duty, in leaving the dictates of your own heart to decide a question which Mr. Clare has proposed to me—a question directly bearing upon this subject. And you will please bear in mind, Angela, that in all worldly regards—to which it might be my duty to look—be my approval."

He bowed in reverence or devotion toward her as he ceased, and turning, passed on through the corridor, and down toward his stables. As he came back, Carlos met him with a package of letters.

"It was the postman's ring, sir," he said, briefly, and Templeton, receiving the bundle, sought his own chamber. Petitions for support in a thousand different ways—for a silent partnership in his profession; for the encouragement of his name in letters; congratulations from men, and badly-spelt laudations from women, were passed by unheeded. At length, however, the signature, the chirography, or the first few lines of one of these communications, riveted his wandering attention, and for the moment rendered him oblivious of everything about him.

This was the subject of the letter:

"The world gives you credit for an exalted sense of honor, and Miss Treasylan affirms that you have deep feeling. Are they correct? For once you are leaving your friends in doubt. Are you so far-sighted that you can read all the hidden intricacies of government with the secret promptings of other men's hearts, yet are blind to the emotions of your own and those about you? Your worst enemies are unwilling to believe that with a full consciousness of your power over women, you took the young and beautiful daughter of Carroll Treasylan to your own home where you might forever destroy her peace. What then is your object? Those who have looked at you with more critical eyes than you would imagine, believe that her wonderful beauty has wrought a great change even in your cold and ordinarily unimpassioned nature. You must have seen, for they who can read, that Miss Treasylan loves you with all the ardor of her generous, impassioned nature. This is the firm conviction of all who know her, who have watched her while her gaze would follow you through crowded halls, have seen her cheeks flush, and her eyes sparkle at the cheers which greeted you, and her whole face light up when you approach her

as it does for no other. Can you think of this and not be melted? Her modesty, as great as her beauty, may have led you to doubt her, for she would naturally throw all the reserve that she could summon up around her, when in your presence; but with your penetration, you have only to study her for half an hour to be convinced of what we say. Your duty then, Earle Templeton, to the daughter of your best friend, to the child of the woman whose death sighs have upon your bosom, and for whom you pledged every effort of your life to secure happiness, is plain and unavoidable. The love you, and you are compelled to offer her your hand, your fortune and your name. You dare not hesitate; or both of you must suffer incalculably in the estimation of the world, to whose good opinion you have attached a value, it is to be regretted, above all domestic happiness. Be warned and set promptly."

"A FRIEND."

"Fools! Inconceivable fools!" muttered Templeton, bitterly, as he crushed the letter in his hand. "That the man who dares to look upon her guileless nature and attribute to her the motives that might actuate their own coarse souls! I do the shallow and insidious advice which they have presumed to thrust upon me," and he drew the crumpled sheet upon the hearth, and set his foot upon it. "The parish every thought which it may have conceived," he added, as he beheld it shrivel into ash, and he turned and strode out beneath the great lime tree to recover his composure. But strive as he would, the recollection would not down at his bidding, and there were moments when, despite all his efforts, he found himself hugging a fierce and terrible joy to his breast.

(To be continued in our next. Continued in No. 16.)

THE MODERN UNDINE.

BY PHOENIX.

"Faintly faintest, icy regular, splendidly snail, Dead perfection, no more."

Her face, as reflected in the deep mirror of the stream as she leaned over the side of the boat, was wondrously beautiful. The eyes large violet, with a soft, dreamy look in them; her hair, as it floated in rich masses like a golden cloud, but the mouth, with its wistful expression, and the dignity of pose and loveliness of manner, outwitted description; and yet there was a "something" lacking. The dove-like eyes had no soully lurking in their violet depths ready to greet respectively that of another, and in the voice there was lacking that sympathetic chord that betrays secrets. Yet she was wondrously beautiful as she sat leaning on her oars, handing smart speeches with two in another boat passing up the river.

"Don't you two get dreadfully tired of 'spooning' all day long? I should think it would tire you fearfully, Mr. Vintnor."

"You are not a judge, Miss Marion," said he, lazily looking from under the brim of his hat. "I wonder what he is?"

"My own little girl. Is it not?" premeditated the soft hands in his.

The shadowy sound had died away, and with it this new-born passion which his song had called forth, but it was with trembling lips that she answered—

"I don't love you, Mr. Laurie. I have been called heartless, a flirt, and—"

There is some stanza to my song. Would you like to hear it?" and the deep voice sounded through the hall, leaving in a vague and billowy unrest.

Has each person, I wonder, a "key-note" to their character which renders them vulnerable to one in perfect unison with it? I doubt it, and yet how else account for this story, unless we say that the modern Undine found her soul through caprice and through no "sympathetic chord" whatever.

Be it or be it not caprice that moved Marion this time, the feeling was more lasting. As Guy's song ended he did not turn as before, but sat, his face buried in his hands.

"Have I wounded you?" she said, leaning forward.

"Yes, unspasmodically, but I, too, can go out to seek peace, I suppose."

"And die?"

"Yes, die; I suppose so." Wearily playing over the refrain, and ending with the last few chords.

"But I cannot let you."

"You will take back those cruel words, those heartless words that you uttered just now?"

"Yes, all, every one, if you will."

"And what words will you give me instead?"

"Thine forever and ever."

"Forever and ever," and so their compact of mutual love was sealed, and the people of the river saw two of the prettiest wedding parties ever saw in their lives instead of one.

"Undine won't last!" The long lingering "soul" brought to the light of mortal eyes by sympathetic power. May Heaven bless thee, Marion, and make thy life a happy one, and thy death different from that of the Undine of olden story.

Thaddeus Fairbanks, of St. Johnsbury, Vt., the scale manufacturer, has been created a Knight of the Imperial Order of Francis Joseph, by the Emperor of Austria. Sir Thaddeus will have to emigrate to enjoy the dignity.

Miss Julia Ward Howe asserts that while men rule and revolutionize, there is nothing but dumb submission for women. Which the Kingston Freeman supplements with the sympathetic remark that "Julia's dumbness is one of the most affecting spectacles of the age."

A woman in Jacksonville, Ill., let an uncorked bottle of ether in her bed-room when she retired and her friends had great difficulty in waking her.

A witty Cincinnati lady writing from Washington, says Boston draws herself up severely, scans your cerebral developments through her eyeglass, and coolly asks—"What do you know?" New York displays her silks and diamonds, and pertly asks—"What are you worth?" Philadelphia, with prim hands and pursed-up lips, asks—"Who was your grandfather?" While Washington, between the waltz and the German to inquire—"Can you dance?"

Two little misses in Philadelphia, gave a doll's ball one evening some time ago. Invitations written upon miniature note-paper were sent to thirty or forty of the most aristocratic of the Quaker City set, and in every instance, the invitations were accepted. The dolls presented themselves in full ball costume, and some were most exquisite. Supper was served at the unusual hour of eight o'clock. The service and the proportion of food corresponded with the size of the guests. Champagne, in bottles about the size of one's finger, was placed in silver coolers of equal height. After dinner there was dancing, which continued about an hour, when the servants announced that "Miss Dollie Dumplings's carriage stops the way," a signal for the termination of the ball.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Immoderate laughter at a public entertainment cost a man at Greenacres, Ind., a fine of \$14.

Joachim, aged 107 years. He was a soldier under Napoleon Bonaparte.

A man out West who has married and buried three sisters, now comes up smiling at the altar, having begun on a new family.

"Old and New" says on the cover of the January number that it is "the only literary magazine published in New England."

A culprit in a Chicago police court began an address to the justice with, "Now, just look here, old Hinky," and got ten days for contempt.

There are said to be five living female poets in Rhode Island, who are all uneducated. Probably the men were too afraid to take them for better or for worse.

Dabney policemen have a "society" thing. A man there hired one of them at \$3 per night to watch his wife, and she was at the same time paying the same man \$1 per night to watch her husband.

A family of eight brothers, named Legins, in Douglas county, average six feet four and a half inches in height.

York county fishermen have been found sewing catfish heads on snailshells and selling them as genuine catfish.

A smart man at Sandusky put arsenic in a bottle of wine, hoping that a burglar would drink it, and his wife placed it among one hundred other bottles. The smart man is now wondering which is the bottle he will have a wine mile by arsenic.

A Sing-Sing convict, named Eli Brown, has inherited \$30,000. This, with secured interest, will give him a nice start in life when his five years of seclusion are ended.

A teaching feature of the Boston tea deluge was a group of sentimentalists, who stood for an hour in the chilling fog, looking contemptuously into the water off the wrong wharf.

The most folk of her sex lives in Oakland, California. When about to be married, she insisted that the ceremony should be performed in French, and a post-nuptial was had until the next day.

A French minister was then on hand, and was then refused to be married at all.

Never could a child when you are angry. The Fall River School Committee, at a recent meeting, adopted a resolution ordering all the teachers in the public schools of the city to refrain from corporal punishment of any pupil until the day following the committee of the offense.

Those old smokers never lack for arguments. Lately one replied to a temperance lecturer by the following power: "If water rots the soles of your boots what effect must it have on the coat of your stomach?"

A distinguished German surgeon named Eschschke has invented a process whereby amputation of the limbs may be performed bloodlessly by applying elastic bandages to the limbs above the point of operation. The method has been successfully tried in England.

The Englishman who made a heavy wager with a distinguished man of science that the world was flat, and was afterward indicted for libel for writing insulting letters to the umpire who decided against him, is now declared to be insane.

A dry goods dealer at Liver-de-Orte, N. H., recently missed a sum of money which he had placed between some goods on the counter, whereupon he applied for warrants of arrest against everybody who had traded with him that day, and didn't find his money after all.

The hard times in Ploche have had a depressing effect upon the business of the place. It is said that one pawnbroker there holds over 2,000 revolvers and knives deposited with him by impetuous fighters as collateral security.

The skull of a prehistoric man, recently found in Kansas, was supposed to have lived several thousand years before Adam, has been discovered to be a part of a large shell.

Heroism in females is said to be limited, because a girl in New Hampshire who jumped into a river to rescue a drowning child, fainted away when she saw her false curls floating down the stream.

The editor of the Vicksburg Herald spent \$800 on a church fair, hoping to get the prize of \$3,000 in gold, and drew a brass chain and a photograph of George Washington. This world has no farther pleasure for him.

A female pauper who died in a New York hospital, the other day, had a small fortune sewed up in her clothing. She had starved herself to board the money which she begged. And now a nephew steps in and claims it as sole heir.

The tomb of Petrarch has been lately opened at Arqua, in north Italy. The body was not in good preservation, but it was sufficiently shown that Petrarch was a robust man, with a head of medium size.

A firm of Louisville window shades advertised to send a perfect watch, warranted to keep exact time, for \$1. On sending the money the victim received a small sun-dial, worth about ten cents.

Hartford, Conn., couple recently received by express, from some unknown donor, a handsome silver tea service, on the occasion of their silver wedding. A few days afterward they were notified by the discovery that it had been delivered in mistake by the express company, and were compelled to return the prize.

An English professor has been putting his knife into a parish legend which made it out that the church was planned by day and built by night by invisible powers. The professor examined into the early records of the parish and discovered that the architect of the church was a Mr. Day and its builder a Mr. Knight.

The economical authorities of Grat-ton, Mo., refrain from arresting Moses Tenney, who recently considered his wife on the ground that his age and infirmities render it "quite probable that in the course of nature his miserable existence may be ended by death before he will be arraigned in our courts."

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